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Annual meeting recap

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New bill design

A decade of stability, a road ahead: Your annual meeting recap

On June 6th, member-owners gathered for EnerStar's Annual Meeting. The meeting displayed the cooperative difference and celebrated the co-op's commitment to the local communities it serves.

New faces, familiar faces on the board

Each year, the cooperative membership elects fellow members to serve on the co-op's board of directors. In Voting District A, Jeff Zimmerman of Oakland retired from the board of directors after more than 20 years of service to the co-op. John Henry, also of Oakland, ran uncontested for the open seat. In Voting District B, incumbent Thad Martin of Paris ran uncontested. John Henry and Thad Martin were elected by acclamation at the meeting. Voting District C featured a contested election, in which incumbent director Danny Gard of West Union was reelected via mail-in ballots sent to District C members.

Settling disputes: A faster, fairer process

Members approved a bylaw change clarifying how disputes between members and the co-op are resolved. The new process has three steps: informal conversation first, then mediation, and – if still unresolved – binding arbitration. The goal is faster, lower-cost resolutions that benefit the whole membership.

Message from the CEO

EnerStar CEO Angela Griffin opened with good news before walking members through a forward-looking plan focused on fairness, transparency and member education.

Good news: No rate increase planned in 2026

In an era of rising utility costs, EnerStar continues to deliver stability. The cooperative has no rate increase planned in 2026, and leadership remains committed to keeping members informed as the cooperative moves forward.

A decade of stable rates

The numbers tell a steady story. Over the past 10 years, EnerStar's average annual rate increase has been less

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than 1% – compared to an average inflation rate of 3.7% per year over the same period. During that time, the cooperative invested in grid upgrades and vegetation management to improve reliability, reduced long-term debt, and returned equity to members through capital credit refunds.

Those achievements came despite real challenges – rising material and fuel costs, supply chain disruptions, and the added expense of serving one of Illinois' most rural service territories, where fewer members share the cost of maintaining infrastructure.

Our power partner: WVPA

Griffin also addressed how EnerStar approaches power supply. EnerStar purchases its wholesale power through Wabash Valley Power Alliance (WVPA), a not-for-profit generation and transmission cooperative. WVPA operates on the same cooperative principles as EnerStar – democratic member control, commitment to rural communities, and a diverse generation strategy designed to protect member cooperatives from high-capacity prices. The partnership reflects shared values, not just a business arrangement.

Behind the scenes: Planning for the future

Griffin described the current period as a “transition year,” with two major initiatives underway: a Multi-Year Work Plan that maps out infrastructure and operational priorities, and a Cost-of-Service Study that identifies the true cost drivers across the cooperative. Together, they'll give EnerStar the foundation to ensure rates are fair and aligned with the actual cost of delivering power.

“This work is about making sure we're running an efficient and equitable system for our members – not about triggering a rate increase,” Griffin said. “It is a major tool in the toolbox to make sure we are good financial stewards of our members' assets.”

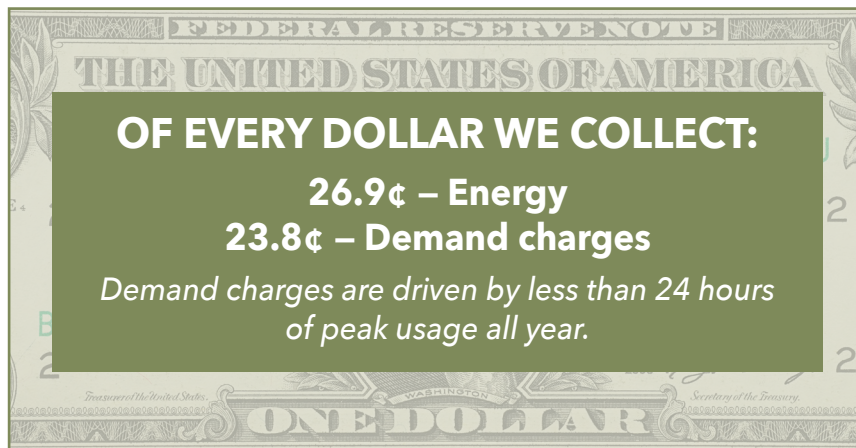
The numbers tell a steady story. Over the past 10 years, EnerStar's average annual rate increase has been less than 1% – compared to an average inflation rate of 3.7% per year over the same period.

It's not just what you use – it's when

Not all kilowatt-hours cost the same to deliver – and understanding why was one of the presentation's most important takeaways.

The key variable is demand – not just how much electricity a member uses, but how fast they use it. When a member draws heavily at once, the cooperative must have enough power on standby to meet that peak at a moment's notice, and that comes at a cost. It's called a demand charge, and it's based on a member's single highest spike each billing period.

For EnerStar, that cost is already significant – more than half of every dollar collected goes to wholesale power. “A handful of hours each year drives nearly a quarter of what our members pay,” Griffin said. “Managing those peak hours is one of the most important things we can do to control costs going forward.”





What might change: A look at demand rates

At present, EneStar does not bill members separately for demand. Those costs are bundled within the energy charge. As the Cost-of-Service Study is completed, the cooperative expects to restructure how rates are designed – separating demand into its own line item so that bills more accurately reflect the true cost of service.

Rate restructuring is not expected to significantly increase revenue for the cooperative, but it will more fairly recover costs. New rates may give some members greater control over what they pay by shifting when and how they use electricity. Simple changes – like avoiding running the dishwasher, dryer and air conditioner all at the same time – can meaningfully reduce a household's peak demand and help lower costs for the entire cooperative.

The bottom line

Griffin closed with a message that tied everything together. "Affordable. Stable. Equitable," Griffin said. "Those three words aren't just a rate philosophy – they're our mission, and they're the promise we make to every member-owner we serve."

Results of the director election



John Henry
District A



Thad Martin
District B



Danny Gard
District C

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

August heat can put your air conditioner to the test, making it a great time to check your system's air filter. A dirty, clogged filter restricts airflow, forcing your cooling system to work harder than necessary to keep your home comfortable. That extra strain can reduce efficiency, increase energy use and contribute to unnecessary wear and tear on equipment. Inspect your filter monthly during periods of heavy air conditioner use and replace it if it appears dirty. A clean filter supports efficient operation and can even enhance indoor air quality—helping you stay cool and comfortable during the hottest days of summer.



New look coming to your August bill

Keep an eye out for your August 2026 billing statement – it'll have a brand-new look. We're refreshing the design to make it cleaner, clearer and easier to read, so you can find what you need at a glance.

One thing to know up front: This is a redesign of the statement only. **Your electric rates have not changed.**

Look for the bill stuffer included with your August statement for a full "How to Read Your Bill" guide or visit our website for details. As always, questions are welcome – call Member Services at 800-635-4145 or email memberservices@enerstar.com.



HAPPY
LABOR
DAY

*Our office will be closed
Monday, September 7.*



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